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Miscellaneous Articles and Extracts.

IDENTITY OF THE FESTIVALS OF ROME AND BABYLON.

FROM THE BRITISH MESSENGER.

IF Rome be indeed the Babylon of the *Apocalypse*, and the Madonna enshrined in her sanctuaries be the very queen of heaven, for the worshipping of whom the fierce anger of God was provoked against the Jews in the days of Jeremiah, it is of the last consequence that the fact should be established beyond all possibility of doubt; for that being once established, every one who trembles at the Word of God must shudder at the very thought of giving such a system, either individually or nationally, the least countenance or support. Many things go far to prove the identity of the Roman and Babylonian systems; but at every step the evidence becomes still more overwhelming. That which arises from comparing the different festivals of the two systems is peculiarly so.

The four leading festivals of Rome are Christmas-day, Lady-day, Easter, and Assumption; and each and all of these can be proved to be Babylonian. In regard to the first, it is admitted by the most learned and candid writers of all parties, that the time of our Lord's birth is entirely unknown, and that, *within the Christian church*, no such festival was ever heard of till the fourth century.* Long before that period, however, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated *among the heathen*, at that precise time, in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen. Thus was it in Egypt, where the son of Isis—the Egyptian title for the queen of heaven—was said to have been born, as may be seen in Wilkinson, "about the time of the winter solstice."† The festival so generally held among the ancient Pagan nations of the

world, at that period of the year, has been commonly believed to have had only an astronomical character, referring simply to the completion of the sun's yearly course, and the commencement of a new cycle. But there is indubitable evidence that the festival in question had a much higher reference than this, that it commemorated, not the mere figurative birthday of the sun in the renewal of its course, but the birthday of the grand deliverer. Among the Sabeans of Arabia, who regarded the moon, and not the sun, as the visible symbol of the great object of their idolatry, the same period was celebrated as the birth-festival. Thus we read in Stanley's *Sabean Philosophy*:—"On the 24th day of the tenth month," that is December, according to our reckoning, "the Arabians celebrated the BIRTH-DAY OF THE LORD, that is the moon."‡ The Lord-moon was the great object of Arabian worship; and that Lord-moon, according to them, was *born* on the 24th of December, which clearly shows that the *birth* which they celebrated had no necessary connection with the course of the sun. Even where the sun was the visible object of worship, as in Babylon itself and elsewhere, at this festival he was worshipped, not as the orb of day, but as God incarnate. It was an essential principle of the Babylonian system, that the sun was the One Only God. When, therefore, Tammuz was worshipped as God incarnate, that implied also that he was an incarnation of the sun. In the Hindoo mythology, which is admitted to be essentially Babylonian, this comes out very distinctly. There Surya, or the sun, is represented as being incarnate, and *born* for the purpose of subduing the enemies of the gods, who, without such a birth, could not have been subdued.§

* Gieseler's *Ecc. Hist.*, vol. i.

† *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 420.

‡ Stanley *apud* Le Clerc, vol. ii., p. 215.

§ See the *Researches* of Col. Vans Kennedy,

There can be no doubt, then, that the Pagan festival at the winter solstice, in other words, Christmas, was held in celebration of the birthday of the Babylonian Messiah.

The consideration of the next great festival in the Popish calendar, gives the very strongest confirmation to what has now been said. That festival, called Lady-day, is celebrated at Rome, on the 25th of March, in alleged commemoration of the miraculous conception of our Lord in the womb of the virgin. But before our Lord was either conceived or born, that very day was observed in Pagan Rome in honour of Cybele, the mother of the Babylonian Messiah.* Now it is manifest that Lady-day and Christmas-day stand in intimate relation to one another. Between the 25th of March and the 25th of December, there are just exactly nine months. If, then, the Babylonian Messiah was conceived in March and born in December, can any one for a moment believe, that the conception and birth of the true Messiah can have so exactly synchronised—not merely to the month, but to the very day? The thing is incredible. Lady-day and Christmas, then, are purely Babylonian.

Then look at Easter. Easter, as now celebrated in the Romish church, with its Carnival and six weeks Lent, was unknown even at Rome till so late as about the middle of the sixth century. Whence did it derive such a festival? The very name, current among ourselves, shows its Chaldean origin. The Anglo-Saxon goddess, from whom both the month of April and the Pagan festival, celebrated by our ancestors in that month, derived the name of Easter, was none other than Astarte, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name, as found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments, is Ishtar.† The festival of which we read in Church history, under the name of Easter, in the third or fourth centuries, was quite a different festival from that now observed in the Romish church, and, at that time, was not known by any such name as Easter. It was called Pasch, or the Passover, and, though not of apostolic institution, was very early observed by many Christians in commemoration of the death and resur-

rection of Christ. That festival agreed originally with the time of the Jewish passover, when Christ was crucified, a period which, in the days of Tertullian, in the middle of the third century, was believed to have been the 25th of March.‡ That festival was not idolatrous, and it was preceded by no Lent. The forty days' abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshippers of the Babylonian goddess. Such a lent of forty days "in the spring of the year" is still observed by the Yezidis or Pagan devil-worshippers of Kurdistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians. Such a lent of six weeks, or forty-two days, was observed in Egypt, as may be seen on consulting Wilkinson's *Egyptians*.§ Amongst the Pagans this Lent seems to have been an indispensable preliminary to the festival in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Tammuz, which was celebrated by alternate weeping and rejoicing, and which was considerably later than the Christian festival—being observed in Palestine in June; in Egypt, in the middle of May; and in Britain, towards the end of April. To conciliate the Pagans to nominal Christianity, Rome, pursuing its usual policy, took measures to get the Christian and the Pagan festivals amalgamated. The Christian festival was thrown later; the Pagan one was somewhat advanced; and, by a complicated but skilful adjustment of the calendar, it was found no difficult matter in general to get Paganism and Christianity—now far sunk in idolatry—in this, as in so many other things, to shake hands. About the end of the sixth century, the reformed calendar of Rome, with all its Paganism, was made imperative on all within the Roman empire of the West. It was in Britain that the first attempt was made to enforce the observance of the new calendar; and here the attempt met with vigorous resistance. The difference betwixt the Christian Pasch, as observed in Britain, and the Pagan Easter enforced by Rome, at the time of its enforcement, was a whole month,|| and it was only by violence and bloodshed at last, that the festival of the Anglo-Saxon or Chaldean goddess came to supersede that which had been held in honour of Christ.

If what has been already said shows the carnal policy of Rome, at the expense of truth, the circumstances attending the festival of the Assumption shows the daring wickedness and blasphemy of that

p. 348. Colonel K., the most learned Sanscrit scholar of the day, brings the Brahmans from Babylon. Be it observed, the very name Surya, given to the sun all over India, points at this birth. It is just the Sanscrit variation of "Zero"—"the seed"—in Chaldee. The Præcrit name of the sun is still nearer the scriptural name of the promised "seed"—it is "Suro."

* *Adam's Antiquities*, p. 271.

† *Layard's Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 629.

‡ *Glosser*, vol. i., p. 55.

§ *Egypt. Antiq.*, vol. ii.

|| *Cuminius*, quoted by Archbishop Usher. *Sylloge*, p. 34.

church still more. The doctrine of the Papacy on which the festival of the Assumption is founded, is this—that the Virgin Mary saw no corruption, that in body and soul she was carried up to heaven, and now is invested with all power in heaven and in earth. This doctrine has been unblushingly avowed in the face of the British public in a recent pastoral of the Popish Archbishop of Dublin. Now it is impossible for the priests of Rome to find one shred of countenance for such a doctrine in Scripture. But in the Babylonian system, the fable was ready made to their hand. There it was taught that Bacchus went down to hell, rescued his mother from the infernal powers, and carried her with him in triumph to heaven.* This fable spread wherever the Babylonian system spread; and, accordingly, at this day, the Chinese, from time immemorial, celebrate a festival in honour of the translation of their holy mother, who by her son was delivered from the power of death and the grave. The festival of the Assumption in the Romish church is held on the 25th of August. The festival of the Assumption of the Chinese Madonna, as shown by Sir J. P. Davis, is equally celebrated in the month of August.†

Now, after all this, is it possible to doubt that the Madonna of Rome, and the Madonna of Babylon, are one and the same goddess? It is notorious that the Roman Madonna is worshipped as a goddess; yea, is the supreme object of worship. Will not, then, the Christians of Britain revolt at the idea of longer supporting this monstrous Babylonian Paganism? What Christian constituency could tolerate that its representative should vote away the money of this Protestant nation for the propagation of such blasphemous idolatry? Let these startling facts only be brought home to the mind of the legislature, and surely Maynooth could not stand a year longer. Let intelligent Romanists too, who have been brought up in the Papal communion, seriously consider them. It deeply concerns them to do so. It is not for nothing that these facts, so long hidden, have now at last been brought to light. Rome is destined to fall, and that soon, by a tremendous destruction. But here shine out the love and tender mercy of the Saviour to those who, through the wickedness of designing men, have hitherto been kept in the region and shadow of death. His providence by these revelations is just seconding the warnings of his word, and urging them, before the

wrath come upon Babylon, to the uttermost, to flee out of her to Him, who is indeed "the life and light of men," and who can give them what no priest, and no form of idolatry can give them—true peace of conscience now, and happiness everlasting hereafter. A. H.

WHAT HARM IS THERE IN IT?

It is a dangerous state of mind which disposes a person to put this question, or to admit it. He who does either, will not fail to answer it according to his own wishes, and because he suffers himself to fancy that the thing is agreeable or desirable, will flatter himself that it is also harmless. This appeal is always used to defend a doubtful pursuit. That which is confessedly right needs no such apology. The following remarks by a late author offer some searching warnings to one in the state of mind supposed:—

"Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation, that we may be quickly alarmed at the indication that the thing is becoming a temptation.

"Here is a questionable effect upon me. Nay, is a dangerous effect.

"Certain principles of truth and duty are beginning to slacken their hold upon me.

"Beware of becoming so partial to a thing, that this circumstance shall become a trifling matter. You may have seen such examples. Uneasiness may have been felt for a while. There may have been a questioning whether to relinquish the object; but the heart grew faster to it. Be cautious of pursuing an evident good in the way where there must be temptation. Be especially fearful of that where, if there be good to be obtained, the good is to come afterwards, but the temptation first.

"And be fearful of that where temptation is certain, and the good only possible, or, at least, only probable. A dangerous problem this; how much good possible, is worth how much temptation certain. Let suspicion and alarm be awakened, when we find our minds at work to find out anything to be innocent, against doubt and an uneasy conscience."

Then how important is example! True Christian benevolence would lead us to be very circumspect, not only against what is evil in itself, or would be evil to us, but even against indifferent actions which may be misunderstood, and so exercise an injurious influence on others. Paul had much of this benevolence, and it is strongly pressed on us. See Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii. An eminent Christian gentle-

* *Apollodorus*, lib. iii., c. 5.

† *China*, vol. i., p. 294.

tacitly, if not expressly, violated. A lie is acted, if it be not uttered; and an acted lie is at least as bad as a spoken lie. Nor is this all;—the subordinates are usually implicated in the guilt of the principals; indeed the latter will sometimes require the former to do what they would shrink from doing themselves. Pitiful subterfuge! What a man does by another he does himself; yea, and such employers are far more criminal than the agents whom they employ. Not content with serving Satan themselves, they become his allies in enslaving their dependents. Not satisfied with selling their own conscience, they traffic in the consciences of others. As though it were not enough to practise deceit, they become manufacturers of deceivers.

It is a law of our moral, as it is of our natural, condition, that we shall see if we *will* see, and, if not, be left in darkness; in other words, that we shall see what we believe is to be seen, *if* it exists, and shall not see what we *will not* believe can be seen, *though* it exists. He who believes in the existence of causes for things will discover causes—he who believes in ends will discover ends; but he who does not believe in them will never perceive them. Thus, Faith must precede Knowledge, just as the medium by which light is seen must precede the seeing of the light. Yet Faith respects not fictions. Faith must have Truth to rest upon, otherwise it is not Faith, but Superstition. Reason will be found to confirm whatever is of Faith; it will reject only what is of fancy. So necessary is Faith, that without it we never can stand upon our feet, see afar off, or advance a single step beyond the grovelling, earth-groping, narrow-visioned condition of the mole.

The conclusion, then, to which these reflections bring us, is, that the sceptic, the man of a doubting, disbelieving turn of mind, who extinguishes all Faith in the close candle-light glare of Reason, instead of making Reason stand as a watchful handmaid to Faith, is a man who never can arrive at any clear, extended, or certain knowledge of Truth, since it is Faith alone that has the power to pierce the dark pathway to knowledge, and to lay it open for wisdom to advance on and take possession. “To him that hath shall be given.” “Whoso believeth on me shall not abide in darkness.” “Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt *see* greater things than these.”

ment of sophistry,—and piety into soulless ceremony. In a word, it is Faith alone that can change *Theology into Religion*.—From *Truth's Conflicts and Truth's Triumphs*.